

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO GRACE ANN MURPHY

HON. RALPH REGULA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 14, 2001

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, after 42 years of government service, the last 28 of which was with my office, Grace Ann Murphy has earned a well-deserved retirement. Grace began her government career at the Navy Department, followed by employment at NASA. In 1970, she came to Capitol Hill to work for Rep. Frank Bow, my predecessor in Congress.

When I came to the House in 1973, I was pleased to have Grace continue her service to the constituents of the 16th district. She is well known to residents of the 16th district having advised them on traveling to our Nation's capital, helping to set tours of the Capitol and the White House, and responding to a myriad of constituent requests.

With her vast knowledge of how the Hill works, Grace's skills were particularly appreciated during office moves and Presidential Inaugurations, both events having taken place recently. Grace is extremely knowledgeable about Washington, DC, as she was born and raised here where she graduated from Anacostia High School. She spends her spare time keeping track of all of her fellow classmates for class reunions.

My staff, my constituents, and I will miss Grace not only for her many outstanding contributions in helping to keep our office running smoothly, but especially for the way she made the various holidays special with the appropriate decorations and foodstuffs. We wish her well in her retirement as it is richly deserved.

IN RECOGNITION OF FRANK DOMINGUEZ

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 14, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Frank Dominguez for his committed service to the community of Elizabeth, NJ, and for his extraordinary business achievements.

Frank Dominguez is president and CEO of Imperial Construction Group, Inc., one of the fastest growing construction firms in the country. From 1996 to 1999, sales increased from \$6.4 million to over \$21 million. This year, Imperial stands to earn revenues exceeding \$30 million. Hispanic Business Magazine ranked Imperial as one of the 100 fastest growing Hispanic-owned companies in the United States. The company has over 70 employees who provide construction and design services for private corporations and government agencies.

Many associations have recognized Mr. Dominguez for his outstanding business

achievements. In 1993, he received the "Contractor of the Year" Award from the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey. In addition, the U.S. Small Business Administration has honored him four times in the last 8 years.

In the past three years alone, Imperial has awarded over \$14 million in subcontracts to numerous small businesses in the State. Mr. Dominguez's dedication and commitment in assisting other small businesses speaks volumes about his character.

Frank Dominguez resides in Warren Township, NJ, with his wife and their two children Anthony and Mark.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Frank Dominguez for his hard work and for his years of service to the State of New Jersey, where he has helped build houses, develop and revitalize communities, and change lives for the better.

THE RETIREMENT OF CELIA DOLLARHIDE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2001

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as all federal agencies are keenly aware, the government is losing many valued employees to retirement. Among them, one stands out for her dedication and commitment—Mrs. Celia Dollarhide, Director of Education Service at the Department of Veterans Affairs, who retired on May 3.

Most veterans don't know Celia Dollarhide by name. Her leadership in setting policy, working with Congress, and ensuring that education benefits are paid has been felt by the hundreds of thousands of veterans and their survivors who received an education under one of the three GI Bills during her tenure.

Celia Dollarhide has devoted her working life to federal service. After taking the federal entrance exam, Celia was highly sought by many federal agencies. Fortunately for veterans, she settled on the Veterans Administration. In 1966, Celia began her career as a claims examiner at the Chicago Regional Office, and in 1972 moved to Washington, DC, to work as an Education Specialist. By 1975, Celia was the Chief of the Program Administration Division in the Education Service. After various management positions within the Veterans Benefits Administration, she became the Deputy Director of the Education Service and in 1994, then-Secretary Jesse Brown promoted her meritoriously to the Senior Executive Service. Celia has served the last six years as Director of Education Service.

Throughout her career, Celia has received numerous awards and professional recognition due to her advocacy and leadership on behalf of veterans and their survivors. It is her core belief—that veterans could achieve so much more with an education—that has driven her to succeed at every turn. There is no way to

count the number of people whose lives Celia has affected, and I wouldn't even begin to try.

Mr. Speaker, Celia Dollarhide has met the highest standards to which civil servants can aspire. On behalf of the VA Committee and our staff, I say thank you to this remarkable professional.

RETIREMENT OF CELIA DOLLARHIDE

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2001

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, last week marked the retirement of Celia Dollarhide, longtime Director of the Education Service for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Like most people, I don't like telling friends goodbye. And Celia has been an incredibly helpful friend to me and to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs over the years. Most importantly however, Celia has been an unwavering friend to the men and women who have served our Nation in uniform.

Mrs. Dollarhide has served veterans faithfully for almost 35 years, all of which have been with VA's Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). She has achieved a remarkable record of accomplishment in the education program. From processing individual education claims for veterans to managing the administration of entire benefit structures, Mrs. Dollarhide's career has been devoted over time to three different GI Bill programs. Prior to her management role at VBA, she began her career at the Chicago Regional Office in 1966 as a Veterans Claims Examiner. She then became an Education Specialist when she moved to Washington, DC in 1972.

From 1975 to 1980, Mrs. Dollarhide served as Chief of the Education Service's Program Administration Division. Throughout the 1980's, she assumed the roles of Administrative Officer for VA's Central Region and Special Assistant to the Deputy Chief Benefits Director for Program Management. She returned to the Education Service in 1990 as its Deputy Director. In 1994 our former Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Jesse Brown, had the wisdom to bring Mrs. Dollarhide into the Senior Executive Service. Since that time, she has excelled in her role as Director for the Education Service.

Above all else, Celia Dollarhide has always believed in the power of higher education. As a major proponent of enhanced education benefits for veterans and as a caring administrator, her career stands as a testament to the notion of individual empowerment. Her life's work has focused on empowering the brave men and women who defend this country to become more and achieve more than they ever could have without education.

The VA education benefits that Mrs. Dollarhide has so masterfully administered have helped countless thousands of veterans and servicemembers to make their dreams a

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